

Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development**Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Homer Electric Association****Federal Tax ID: 92-0014079****Project Title:**

Homer Electric Association - Hazardous Tree Removal Project

State Funding Requested: \$ 250,000**House District: Kenai Areawide (33-35)**

One-Time Need

Brief Project Description:

On-going removal of beetle killed trees that are outside the utility right-of-way but still present a hazard to the electric facilities and present a fire safety hazard to property.

Funding Plan:**Total Cost of Project: \$250,000**Funding Secured

Amount FY

Other Pending Requests

Amount FY

Anticipated Future Need

Amount FY

There is no other funding needed

Detailed Project Description and Justification:

The Kenai Peninsula has endured a spruce beetle infestation for some years; the result of which is hundreds of thousands of beetle-killed trees throughout the Peninsula. The dead timber is a considerable hazard to the electric power lines during high winds, snow storms, and the like.

Homer Electric Association has mounted an aggressive tree clearing program, using a combination of cooperative funds and legislative grants, which they intend to continue over the next few years to protect their facilities.

The program also has a positive effect in that it helps lessen the chance of wildfires, a health and public safety benefit to all property owners Kenai Peninsula - private and government. In many cases, clearing of areas near the utility easement is on public lands; both federal and state lands, which are otherwise left unaltered and pose severe safety concerns during wildfires.

The clearing performed by HEA is literally a "fire break" which also happens to protect the utility's investment in overhead power lines.

Project Timeline:

Began in 2006, using all utility funds, some funds from state used last year, expected to continue for next 3 years.

Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:

Homer Electric Association

Grant Recipient Contact Information:

Contact Name: Brad Janorschke

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Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Homer Electric Association's Hazard Tree Removal Project

Homer Electric Association has mounted an aggressive tree clearing program, using a combination of grants and cooperative funds. The cooperative plans to continue this effort over the next several years to protect facilities and lessen the chance of wildfires.

The \$250,000 FY 2007 Designated Legislative Grant for Homer Electric was used to protect a power line that is vitally important to the residents of Halibut Cove, Seldovia, Port Graham, and Nanwalek. The beetle-killed trees, many located outside of the right-of-way, come into contact with power lines on a regular basis, causing damage to electric facilities and creating costly power outages for our members. The situation is also creating a serious fire hazard.



In the summer of 2007, tree clearing crews worked in the Neptune Bay area and removed over 4-thousand beetle-killed spruce trees outside of the right-of-way. This work, in conjunction with prior clearing efforts, has resulted in a significant improvement to the



electric service provided to HEA members living on the south side of Kachemak Bay.

The \$250,000 FY 2008 Designated Legislative Grant is being used to clear beetle-killed trees in the Nikiski and Kenai areas. In 2007, nearly 5,000 beetle-killed trees outside of the right-of-

way in the area have been cleared.

Homer Electric would like to extend its sincere appreciation to the Kenai Peninsula legislative delegation for its support of state funding to remove beetle killed trees from outside the right-of way. **This is an ongoing project and Homer Electric respectfully requests that a \$250,000 state appropriation be included in the FY 2009 budget.**